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The situation in the Middle East

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Identical letters dated 20 June 2002 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to convey to you the following:

Israel is threatening to launch a large-scale military attack on Lebanon and Syria and to enter their territory on the pretext that Lebanon is sheltering elements of Al-Qaida and that the national resistance has received "thousands of Katyusha rockets", as alleged by Israeli chief of general staff Shaul Mofaz when speaking before the Knesset foreign affairs and security committee.

Faced with the customary Israeli fabrications and inventions and in the delicate situation in which the Middle East region finds itself owing to Israel's aggressive practices and its constant incursions and intrusions into the Palestinian territories, Lebanon would like to call attention to the points set forth hereunder.

(a) Israel's charge that there are Al-Qaida elements in Lebanon's territory is false and groundless. Lebanon has affirmed that it cooperates fully with the United Nations and the international community in countering terrorism within the framework of the relevant United Nations resolutions.

(b) The contrived Israeli claims that Hizb Allah has received "thousands of Katyusha rockets" and weapons "in order to engage in military action against Israel", as alleged by its chief of general staff before the Knesset foreign affairs and security committee, are untrue. Israel is fabricating these claims in order to mask its occupation of Arab territories, including the Shab`a farmlands, to distract attention from its aggressive practices and constant incursions and outrages in the occupied Palestinian territories and to aggravate the military situation in the region, thus threatening international peace and security, while Lebanon is endeavouring to secure a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East region. Lebanon, together

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with all the Arab States, confirmed this fact in adopting the Arab peace initiative at the Beirut summit of March 2002.

(c) In addition to its aforementioned practices, Israel's military escalation is exemplified by the provocations embodied in its constant breaches of Lebanon's sovereignty and its violations of Lebanese airspace and territorial waters.

Faced with these threats, which are supported by Israeli reinforcements in the border zone, Lebanon urges the Security Council to meet its responsibilities by taking immediate action to require Israel to desist from its threats and provocations, to deter it from pursuing this policy of aggression and to ensure that it is held responsible for its posture and for the consequences it might have.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 42, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Houssam Asaad **Diab**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.